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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/736,513	12/17/2003	Douglas A.J. Mockett	T3488-908163US02	6208
181	7590	07/13/2004	EXAMINER ✓	
MILES & STOCKBRIDGE PC 1751 PINNACLE DRIVE SUITE 500 MCLEAN, VA 22102-3833			MAH, CHUCK Y	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3676	

DATE MAILED: 07/13/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/736,513

Applicant(s)

MOCKETT, DOUGLAS A.J.

Examiner

Chuck Mah

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 28-51 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 28-51 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. The numbering of claims is not in accordance with 37 CFR 1.126 which requires the original numbering of the claims to be preserved throughout the prosecution. When claims are canceled, the remaining claims must not be renumbered. When new claims are presented, they must be numbered consecutively beginning with the number next following the highest numbered claims previously presented (whether entered or not).

In the preliminary amendment, applicant canceled claims 1-27 and added new claims 28-51. The original application, however, contains only claims 1-13. It is uncertain whether there is a mismatch of papers in the application file.

Misnumbered claims 28-51 should be renumbered in the next communication.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

2. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

3. Claims 30-34, 42, 45, 46, 50 and 51 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The scope of claims 30-34 is confusing. From independent claim 29 it is understood that "A separable tab and grommet cap combination" is being claimed. There is no "aperture" or "sleeve" being positively recited. Later in claim 30, "the aperture ... in a sleeve" is introduced into the claim. It is unclear

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whether a tab-cap-sleeve combination is being claimed or only a tab-cap combination is being claimed. For examination purpose claims 30-34 are treated as being environmental, not containing any positive limitations.

Claim 42 is vague and indefinite because the "shank" is being defined in terms of the "aperture" which is an extraneous part of the invention.

In claim 45, line 14, it cannot be understood what "the tab" is referring to and how it is structurally related to the invention as claimed.

Claim 51 is confusing. As understood from claim 45, the "shank" and the "sleeve" are two separate elements and "at least one rib" is part of the "sleeve."

Claim 51 suggests that the "rib" is part of the "shank".

Double Patenting

4. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

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Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

5. Claims 28-44, and 47-49 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No. 6,694,566. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because they are but different definitions of the same subject matter, vary in breadth or scope of definition as set forth in MPEP 806.03.

6. Claim 45, 46, 50 and 51 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-12 of U.S. Patent No. 6,694,566 in view of Mockett (Des. 285,044). '566 discloses the invention as claimed but for the sleeve. '044 shows a grommet having a sleeve with a rib for a frictional fit to an aperture. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the grommet of '566 with a sleeve as shown by '044 to retain the grommet in the aperture.

Conclusion

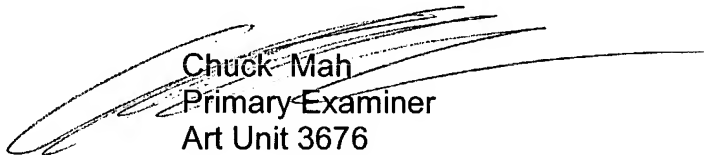
7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Chuck Mah whose telephone number is (703) 308-0676. The examiner can normally be reached on 5/4-9.

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Heather Shackelford can be reached on (703) 308-2978. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).



Chuck Mah
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 3676

CM